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ABSTRACT

The major issues surrounding the problems in American education are intertwined and obliquely connected in ways that are not clear to the casual reader or to single-issue authors. This handbook was designed to provide educators with information to refute claims that the American public education system is in a state of disarray and imminent collapse. It seeks to dispel the following myths: (1) Scholastic Aptitude Test scores are declining and have been doing so since 1963; (2) more students dropped out in 1993 than ever before; (3) education costs more and does less; (4) the American education system is not producing enough scientists or engineers for America to keep up with a global economy, let alone compete successfully in that economy; and (5) the U.S. is doing a poorer job educating its students than the other countries of the world. Chapter 1 contains the entire text of the 1983 report, "A Nation at Risk"; a summary of the results of the 1990 Scandia Report, which contradicted many of the previous report's allegations; and an article by Daniel Tanner, which describes how the Scandia Report was commissioned and why it was later suppressed by the federal government. Chapter 2 contains 12 articles that document the condition of children in the United States today, touching on issues of children in poverty, violence, fetal alcohol syndrome, crack babies, and child neglect. Ten articles in chapter 3 provide evidence to support the overall good performance of public schools. A conclusion is that the schools are but one constituent of society, and no one social institution can solve all of the nation's problems. References accompany each article. (Contains 44 references.) (LMI)

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